2:Evans-Pritchard E-5 (1931, 1936) 1951
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582 561 kind of kinship. In certain circumstances an age-mate may claim a cow, the *yang rica*, of the bridewealth of the daughter of one of his mates and a man may not be in the position of paying bride-
[606] wealth and being able to claim it. Nuer point out also that were a man to marry the daughter of an age-mate her parents would become his parents-in-law, and the respect he would have to show them would be incompatible with the familiarity with which he should treat age-mates and their wives and the liberties he may take with them. He could not, for instance, eat and drink in their home, an abstention in glaring contradiction to the behaviour expected of age-mates. The prohibition on marriage with the daughter of an age-mate imposes no inconvenience on Nuer, for there would always be a great difference in age between the man and woman, and this is, in any case, an obstacle to marriage seldom surmounted in Nuerland. Strictly speaking, a breach of this prohibition is not *rual* but Nuer say that it is 'like *rual*'. The prohibition is said to have been ordained by God, and it is believed that the guardian spirit of the age-set will avenge a breach of it.

It is said that in the past a man would not have been allowed to marry the daughters of his father's age-mates, for they are in a sense his sisters. It is still not permissible for such a marriage to take place if both the fathers are alive, since this would mean that the two age-mates would enter into a relationship characterized by mutual reserve and in conflict with the egalitarian status of age-mates towards one another. When one of the fathers is dead marriage can take place, but in this case a cow, or more likely a sheep or goat, must be given by each family to the other. This exchange is in payment to the *ric*, the age-set, of the fathers to avoid evil consequences, the animal being called 'the cow of compensation (or atonement) of the age-set'. There is no clash between patterns of behaviour when one of the fathers is dead because the attitudes towards a member of a father's age-set and towards a father-in-law are both of respect.

582 The rules I have recorded above can be generalized by saying, as Nuer do, that a man may not marry a woman who is *mar*, kin, to him. In the rules prohibiting marriage, kinship is traced farther in some directions than in others and is of different kinds: the clan kinship of the common spear; the *buth* kinship of collateral lineage and of adoption; uterine kinship; kinship through the genitor; the kinship of cognation; kinship which the birth of a

2:Evans-Pritchard E-5 (1931, 1936) 1951
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ties between persons and of regulating the interrelations between these persons till such time as their relationships become assimilated to kinship patterns—broadly speaking its role in the kinship system—and its structural role in interlineage relations. 583

V

The parents and kin of a young wife scarcely acknowledge her husband's existence until a second child has been born to the union. If there is any need to refer to him they speak of him as *co*, the husband of, followed by his wife's name, and they speak of his village as his wife's village and of his children by reference to her name and not to his. It is also customary for the wife's people to give her children different personal names from those given them by their father's people, and if they address them by an honorific title they use that of their own clan and not that of the husband's clan. 606 [601]

Nevertheless, after the birth of the first child the marriage is held to have become a complete union. The husband has established a kinship tie with his wife's kin, who now address him as father of so-and-so, after the name of his eldest child. He is no longer merely the husband of their daughter. Instead of paying clandestine visits to the home of his parents-in-law (*ciengthu*) he may visit them openly, though he must continue to treat his in-laws, particularly his parents-in-law, with great respect, expressed in formal modes of address, which are reciprocal, and in other ways, most emphatically in the prohibitions on eating in their home and appearing naked before them.

Even before a young man has started to look for a bride he will not generally eat with much senior men, unless they are kin, because one of them might become his father-in-law. Once he has asked for a girl's hand in marriage he may in no circumstances eat in her home, and the prohibition continues, sometimes greatly to his discomfort, until two or three children have been born, when it is relaxed by a formal ceremony if the parties are on good terms with one another. The father-in-law prepares beer, kills a goat or sheep, and invites the son-in-law and his kin to his home to partake of a feast. He tells his son-in-law that there is no need for him to respect his parents-in-law any more. The son-in-law will refuse to eat, however, till compelled to do so by the insistence of his father-in-law's kin and by his father-in-law's gift of a cow, 'the [576]

2:Evans-Pritchard E-5 (1931, 1936) 1951
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606 cow of the eating of the husband of a daughter', to *cocangnyade*, his daughter's husband's brother. This ceremony is sometimes held when a young sister of the wife is about to be married, so that her husband may take part in the nuptial feasts. Later, the father-in-law visits the homestead of his daughter's husband's brother and will be given beer and meat. Before he can eat or drink he must be given a bull calf or sheep by the owner of the homestead. His daughter's husband is now said to regard him as a father. Before these payments have been made, a son-in-law is to his father-in-law and his wife's paternal uncles in a position formally like that of the kin of a slayer to the kin of the man he has slain in that they cannot eat in one another's homes. The maternal uncle of a wife, who is also *guanthu*, his father-in-law, may likewise give her husband's brother a goat to enable the husband to eat in the homes of his wife's maternal kinsmen.

A son-in-law also respects his parents-in-law by hiding his nakedness in their presence with a wild cat's skin from the day he asks for their daughter's hand in marriage till the day his brother receives a cow to enable him to eat in their home. While the prohibition is in force a son-in-law who is living in the same village or camp as his parents-in-law avoids them as far as possible even when he is wearing a skin. A son-in-law must also—at any rate in some parts of Nuerland—wear sandals when visiting his mother-in-law, as he is dangerous to her should he visit her bare-footed and might cause her to become barren. There are various other customs indicating the mother-in-law to son-in-law relationship, such as the obligation on the survivor, should either die, to visit the grave a few days after burial and throw a bracelet on it. Also a son-in-law must not visit his parents-in-law when they are sick, and they must not visit him when he is sick. A man avoids his mother-in-law and her attitude to him is one of shyness and reserve. Unlike fathers-in-law and brothers-in-law, who ask a husband directly for whatever they want, a mother-in-law trusts that her son-in-law will remember her wants or, if in great need, asks him for a gift through her daughter. The mother-in-law relationship among the Nuer is a subject of mirth, and the foulest slips of the tongue are attributed to mothers-in-law when talking to their daughters' husbands.

All these rules regulating the behaviour of a man to his parents-in-law, and the avoidance and the attitude of reserve which accompany them, are eased after the birth of a second child and slowly

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break down as patterns of affinity change into patterns of kinship, the husband becoming 'the father of our daughter's children' instead of 'our daughter's husband'. A man may even joke with his mother-in-law when there are several children.

The rules about eating and nakedness apply, though in a lesser degree, to kinsfolk of the wife of her parents' generation as well as to the parents themselves, for all her kinsfolk are her husband's in-laws. A man will not appear naked or eat in the homes of his wife's paternal and maternal uncles and aunts or appear naked before the wives of his wife's close kinsmen. I have seen a man's wife's paternal aunt make a great fuss when unintentionally he appeared naked before her. He knelt behind another man to hide his nakedness and receive her reproaches when he became aware of his misdemeanour. On another occasion the fuss was made by a bride's paternal uncle's wife while the astonished bridegroom hastily retired into a hut. Unintentional affronts of this kind are quieted by small payments, such as a spear or a goat. As the genealogical distance from the wife increases, the obligation on the part of her husband to observe these rules lessens. It altogether ceases when the wife's father and maternal uncle have paid beasts to enable him to eat in their homes. Should a divorce take place, the son-in-law at once ceases to treat his in-laws with respect.

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The wife's brother and her other kinsmen of his generation are not avoided, but her eldest brother may refrain from eating with the bridegroom before a child has been born. Nuer say, 'the wife's brother is your brother; since he gave you his sister he became your brother', and 'the husband of your sister is your brother because he will get a cow (the *yang wuca*) on the marriage of your daughter'. After the birth of children a man and his wife's brother can, if great friends, jokingly curse one another in obscene language. The wife's brother's wife is highly respected till a child has been born, though not to the same extent as the mother-in-law, unless the mother-in-law is dead; then 'she becomes your mother-in-law and must be respected as deeply as a mother-in-law'. Nuer say that she then becomes your real mother-in-law and that '*ca mandong*', 'she has become a grandmother' (to the children of her husband's sister, who call their maternal uncle's wife 'grandmother'). The only in-law whom a man need not at any time treat with reserve is his wife's sister. He can joke with her and even exchange abusive language with her. However, if his mother-in-law

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607 is dead he treats her eldest daughter with reserve, for she has then taken her mother's place: 'she has placed the food on the fire' (at her mother's mortuary ceremony). A man and his wife's sister's husband, whom he calls *warombeida*, may be on intimate terms.

602 It is only when the bride is still a maiden that the father and uncles and brothers of the bridegroom are reserved with his parents-in-law. After the marriage is consummated only the husband's father or, if the father is dead, his eldest brother will respect his parents-in-law and only to a small extent, not usually with regard to nakedness and food. Nevertheless, it is customary for the father of the bridegroom to give the father of the bride a spear or goat, and for the father of the bride to make him a similar gift, to enable the two men to eat in one another's homes without shame. A husband's younger brothers do not in any way respect his in-laws and they eat and go naked in their homesteads. On the other hand, it is customary, at any rate in the Lou tribal area, for the youth who acted as the husband's best man in the marriage ceremonies to respect his in-laws till they give him a goat to break down his reserve.

606 Obviously a wife is in a different position *vis-à-vis* her husband's people from that of a husband *vis-à-vis* his wife's people. Nevertheless, while avoidance is impracticable, she treats her parents-in-law with great respect, and in the early days of her marriage she keeps herself apart from them as much as domestic requirements permit. She cannot eat with her mother-in-law, and this prohibition may continue for some years after the birth of her first child. She cannot eat in her husband's home at all before the birth of her first child, and even after this event, when she has come to live with him, she ought not to see him eat or be seen eating by him. However, the inconvenience of this prohibition is evident, and soon after she has taken up residence in her husband's home it will be arranged that her husband enters as though by accident a hut in which she is eating. After this it is no longer shameful for husband and wife to see one another eating, and though the wife is at first shy, she will eventually share her husband's meal when
607 they are alone. Before the birth of her first child a woman respects her husband's sisters and will not eat out of the same dish with them. After the birth of a child she can be on free and easy terms with them, though personal difficulties sometimes make for reserve. Should the mother be dead, her eldest daughter tends to

4: Evans-Pritchard E-5 (1931, 1936) 1948 FJ22 Nuer FJ22

of the husband's kinsfolk outside, who, squatting in front of it, likewise washes his hands in the water, and then fishes out the bracelet. The pot is returned to the hut and a different maiden and a different kinsman repeat the action of the first pair. All the close kinsfolk of the husband—his father's brothers and sisters, his mother's brothers and sisters, and his own brothers and sisters, and so on—are supposed to receive a bracelet, but, in fact, persons standing in some of these relationships will be absent and any person who can claim kinship with the husband can demand a bracelet. If a man's dip into the pot reveals a poor bracelet he does not hesitate to upbraid the girl who put it there and he may select a better one from those on her arm.

The concluding rite of the ceremony is the act from which it derives its name, the shaving of the wife's head (*mut nyiar*) by a member of her husband's family. This may take place after the departure of her companions, for it is a domestic affair of the husband's *gol*, his home, of which the wife is now a member. The shaving of the head signifies this change in her status. People speak of the rite as *wari miew nyiitde*, the removal of the hairs of maidenhood, and they say afterwards of the girl *Cas ak*, 'She has become a wife'. She is at the same time stripped of all her ornaments, which are divided among her husband's kin, and she is arrayed in new finery provided by her husband. She belongs to his, and not her father's, people now and it is for them to adorn her.

The Birth of a Child

The *mut* is the consummation of marriage, but not its completion, which is the birth of a child. The young wife is now called *ark mu kan*, a newly wed. Her parents give her a hut of her own and a sleeping-hide, a brush, and a couple of gourds for ablutions. When her husband comes to visit her in her father's homestead he sleeps with her in this hut. She continues in all other respects to lead the life she led before marriage, and after her husband's visits she hangs up the hide and domestic utensils and sleeps with her unmarried sisters. On these visits her husband stays at a neighbouring homestead as he cannot eat in the home of his parents-in-law and ought not to be seen there at all. When someone tells the wife that her husband has come, so that she may prepare for him, she feigns annoyance or lack of interest, pretending that she is still unmarried, a shyness she keeps up with third persons, though she is at ease when alone with her husband. When everyone is asleep he visits her and spends the night with her, leaving before any of the bride's people are about; her parents are supposed to know nothing of his visits, though, of course, they know all about his movements and it is even said that his mother-in-law may rise especially early and squint through a crack in the door of her hut in order to see him depart. Should he oversleep, and his mother-in-law sees his spears outside her daughter's hut, she makes them forfeit and he would be ashamed to ask for them back. It is not till a child has been born that the husband is accepted by his wife's people as one of themselves; he is then the father of their daughter's child and through the child has a kind of kinship link with them. Till this happens the husband continues to lead the life he lived before marriage, a bachelor life with his younger brothers in their father's byre. His wife visits him only on rare occasions and for a formal purpose, as when, at harvest time, she brings him coverings she has made for the grain on the drying-platforms, or when she takes him a bundle of well-cooked porridge made

4: Evans-Pritchard E-5 (1931, 1936) 1948 FJ22 Nuer FJ22

593 591 from the first millet of the year—a petty custom known as *pathow kaac*, honouring with porridge.

All are equally anxious for a child to be born, the husband and wife because they want a son and the wife's parents and kin because they cannot, without risking 842 complications, dispose of the cattle of the marriage till a first-born completes the union. Those whose daughters they might wish to marry would not be happy about accepting such cattle as bridewealth in case they had suddenly to be returned to the husband. 591 When a child is born the mother remains with her parents till she has weaned it. This is a suitable regulation, because after the bridewealth has been paid the husband's father is likely to be short of lactating cows, while the wife's parents will have plenty of milk from their herd. If, for some reason, the wife goes to live with her husband 862 before the child is weaned, it may not be weaned without the consent of her parents, 602 and I have seen a husband pay several cattle to atone for contravention of this rule. A *kac*, first child, belongs to the home of his maternal grandparents and if he is 603 weaned in his father's home he returns to live with them, a boy till he is initiated and 858 a girl till she is betrothed. This is the rule, though there is variation in practice, depending on the ability of the maternal grandparents to support the child and on the relations between them and their son-in-law.

852 Shortly after the birth of her first-born the wife, now called *pai dap*, a nursing 591 mother, brings the baby to her husband's home and lays him in the ashes of the hearth in the centre of his grandfather's byre, a rite known as *nueg puka*, the bringing to the [273] ashes. Beer has been prepared and is drunk by a few senior kinsmen of the husband who live in his hamlet. It is a domestic, and not a public, ceremony. The wife spends a few days in her husband's home and returns with the child to the village of her parents. She has as yet no hut of her own in her husband's homestead.

591 When his first-born has been weaned the husband builds his wife a hut in his father's 585 homestead facing the family kraal. He then goes to ask his parents-in-law for his wife. They do not deny him, even if, as is likely, some of the bridewealth cattle are still owing. They give her a horn spoon and a gourd and she takes these with her to her husband's home. The gift of a spoon is emphasized by the Nuer in speaking of marriage, because it is a recognition that the woman is now, in the full sense, a wife, who will eat of the porridge of her own gardens with the milk of her own herd. She now milks her husband's cows instead of her father's and hoes the gardens of his home and not those of her childhood. Before she is given a spoon, even if she hoes a garden at her husband's home she takes the harvest back to her father, or she may live at her husband's home and cultivate in her father's village, if it is not far. It is only when a man's bride has borne him a child and tends his hearth that she becomes, in the Nuer sense, his wife. She then makes a *kaar*, a mud fire-screen, and the spirit of his lineage comes to dwell there. Later his father tells him to build a byre and gives him a few cows to start a herd.

The marriage has thus reached completion through many stages: betrothal ceremony, wedding ceremony, consummation ceremony, the birth of a child, the bringing of the first-born to his father's byre, and the presentation to the wife of a [606] spoon as a sign of her domestic separation from her family. She comes to her husband's home not as a wife but as a mother whose breasts have suckled a child of their lineage.

581 complete it and yet more time between the
593 consummation and the birth of a child. I do not say that pressure may not be put on her by her family to accept her husband but parents who try to coerce their daughter run the risk that she will run away to the home of a distant kinsman and there elope with some man. They may lose their bridewealth. Nuer have good grounds for their assumption that a newly wed who has borne her husband a child and brought it to his hearth is satisfied with her mate. By the time a second child is born experience has shown that the pair are agreeable to one another also as domestic partners. As the Nuer observe a weaning taboo
[862] this means about three years after the birth of the first child.

581 Mutual goodwill between the families is also
606 a necessary condition of a successful marriage.
593 Marriage is not only a conjugal relationship but also a set of affinal relations and it can be stable only if the kin on both sides behave towards the other side in the manner expected of them. This they endeavour to do. A man tries not only to live up to the pattern of what the Nuer regard as a good husband but also to be a good son-in-law and his wife's father and mother try to be good parents-in-law to him. The relatives on both sides also try to behave towards those on the other side as persons standing in those relationships should do. It is the evocative and inhibitory action of these moral values, sanctioned by approbation and censure, which give stability to marriage and security to the family that derives from it. Divorce is due to failure of one or other of the parties to live up to the code of conduct expected of him, or her, and Nuer regard it as a misfortune in which there is also an element of the shameful.

582 Conjugal and affinal relations are personal
602 relationships which require adult adjustment that is not easy. A Nuer regulates his behaviour to the persons around him through kinship values of one kind or another. Owing to the extensive range of kinship ties covered by Nuer rules of exogamy it is impossible for a man to marry into a family or lineage with whom he has already existing kinship ties. He must marry the daughter of people who are under no obligation to provide

ll:Evans-Pritchard E-5 (1931, 1936) 1945
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When a man merely visits a widow for purposes of procreation and is not a resident member of her household, and therefore not foster-father to her children, the cow which he receives on the marriage of each daughter he has begotten by her is called *yang lota*, "cow of the loins." One uses the same expression for the cow paid to the genitor of girls born of wives of women, for he also is not usually a permanent member of the household. However, this expression is slightly vulgar and when the genitor is the mother's partner in a more durable union people prefer to speak of a *yang dieth*, "cow of begetting", or *yang tuar*, "cow of the genet's skin". It is called *yang tuar* because a man who has married a wife to the name of a kinsman wears in marriage ceremonies the skin which the kinsmen would have worn had he been alive, and because men living with women in leviritic marriage and widow-concubinage always partake to some extent of the attitude of respect of husbands towards their wives' relatives —an attitude expressed most noticeably by the wearing of a genet's skin around the loins in the presence of their relatives-in-law. Thus they speak of *Yang ne ci rit ne tuar nare*, "The cow with which you twisted to your front the genet's skin of your maternal uncle", for when you married your maternal uncle a wife you sat in his place in the byre of his wife's father during the bride-wealth discussions, and therefore wore a genet's skin, which is tied first so that it falls over the hip and is then twisted to the front to cover the genitals.

When the genitor is also a kinsman of the pater, having married a wife to his name or having lived with his widow, he receives besides "the cow of begetting" whatever cattle are due to a man standing in his particular relationship to the bride's pater. Thus when a man marries his brother a wife he receives "the cattle of the father's brother", and when a man marries his maternal uncle a wife he receives "the cow of the paternal aunt", unless his mother is still alive, for if she is alive she receives it.

As explained above, in certain circumstances an adulterer may ask for a cow in recognition of his physiological paternity. However, this is certainly not always asked for nor, if asked for, granted. If a man begets a female child by a girl whom he is courting and then refuses to marry her, he would not have the effrontery to ask for "a cow of begetting" when his natural daughter is married. He would risk having his skull broken by a club if he were even to visit his natural daughter. Of such a child they say *Cuo dieth gooka*, "It was born in the grass".

When the daughter of an unmarried concubine is married "the cattle of the father" go to her genitor because by payment of a fee he has made himself her pater, though not the husband of her mother. On the other hand "the cattle of the mother" belong to her sons and these may be, or may not be, natural sons of the same man who begat the bride.

This terse statement of the way in which division of bride-wealth indicates the various degrees of paternity will be better understood if Diagram No. V is studied.[1] In Fig. I when C ♀ is married "the cattle of the father" and "the cattle of the mother" go to A ♂. If A ♂ is dead they go to D ♂ and F ♂. In Fig. II when C ♀ is married the cattle of the parents belong legally to D ♂. Z ♂ would receive "the cow of begetting"

[1] [see p. 27. - Analyst]

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14: Huffman M-5 (no date) 1931
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The next morning before she comes out of the house where she has spent the night, the sister of the bridegroom or some other woman relative comes in to bring her the married woman's garb, which they have prepared for her, and such ornaments as they wish to give her. At this time the beads are put in her ears. When she comes out of the house she is attired as a married woman, and from this time on she must wear some kind of a loin-cloth.

Her girl friends and herself are guests at a big feast at the village of her husband that day, at which there is plenty of food and drink in evidence. When the feast is over, the girls return to the home of the bride's mother, for the Nuer bride does not stay with her husband but returns to her mother's home and spends most of her time there for the first year or two of her married life, although her husband may come to see her at any time, or she may go to his village whenever he wishes her to do so.

CUSTOMS CONCERNING MARRIAGE

A wife never eats with her husband nor sees him eat. And he, while he knows she eats her food each day, never sees any sign of it. This custom is usually observed for two or three years. Then they may eat together. The wife usually stays with her mother until her child is a year or two old at least.

The wife must render a daughter's allegiance to her mother-in-law, while her husband, in turn, must help his wife's mother as she desires, hoeing her field, or cutting her dura, or whatever she asks of him.

He never appears before his mother-in-law without a loin-cloth on, and for some time must never come to see her without sending word in advance.

The oldest son is allowed to be married first, and the family unite in getting his cattle ready for him. Then he

15: Butt E-4 (No date) 1952 FJ22 Nuer FJ22

cattle has been handed over.(1) A marriage which has reached the final rites may be regarded as a stable union. 534

The first step occurs when a youth reaches an understanding with a girl and, having some of the necessary cattle, asks her consent to marriage. Both families are consulted and arrangements are made for the betrothal (*lweciang*).

When a definite agreement has been reached about bridewealth cattle, the wedding ceremony (*ngut*) is held at the bride's homestead. The main features of a wedding are: discussions about cattle, which are held in the morning; the invocation over the cattle of the bridewealth, followed by the wedding dance and the wedding sacrifice in the afternoon and evening. Though this ceremony does not conclude the marriage there is every chance, once this point is reached, that the union will be completed. 585

The third of the public ceremonies is the one which, at least among the Eastern Nuer, makes the union legally binding. This is the *nat* (consummation). After it the husband can claim compensation for adultery and the cattle are regarded as marriage cattle and not as a pledge.

Marriage is completed by the birth of a child. Until then the wife sleeps in a hut at her parents' homestead and she remains with her parents until the child is weaned. The first-born child belongs to the home of his maternal grandparents and even if he is weaned in his father's home he returns to live with them. A boy stays with his maternal grandparents until he is initiated, a girl until she is betrothed. The baby is always brought to the father's home for the ceremony of laying him on the ashes of the hearth in the centre of his grandfather's byre, which takes place shortly after birth. 591 603 852

After the weaning, the husband builds his wife a hut in his father's homestead. She goes to live with him as a true wife in that she will now milk his cows and hoe his gardens and not those of her father. She makes a byre, a cool fire screen, and the spirit of his lineage comes to dwell there. Later his father tells him to build a byre and gives him a few cows to start a herd.(2) 591

In-Law Relationships

In-law relationships are marked by certain avoidances and displays of respect. Until his first child is born a husband does not openly visit his parents-in-law's village except in some formal capacity. After the birth he makes public visits, but he treats his parents-in-law with great respect and must not eat with them or appear naked before them. When two of three children have been born, a ceremony takes place after which he no longer has to observe these rules and prohibitions. When the father-in-law visits the husband's home and is entertained and given a bull, calf or sheep, his son-in-law may regard him as a father. The only in-law whom a man need not treat with formal respect is his wife's sister. 606 607

(1) Evans-Pritchard, *Africa*, XVIII, 1948, p.37.
(2) Evans-Pritchard, *Africa*, XVIII, 1948, p.40.

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607 For a man's wife, avoidance is impracticable, but she treats her parents-in-law with great respect and, in the early days of marriage, keeps herself apart from them as much as possible. She is on joking terms with her husband's brothers since, among brothers, the wife of one is, in the social sense, the wife of all.(1)

DIVORCE

586 If a wife dies childless or if her husband divorces her the bride-wealth cattle have to be returned. If a child has been born and is left with the husband then the cattle are returned, minus six. If two children have been born, no cattle are returned. Divorce is recognised as having taken place only if cattle are returned; if a wife leaves her husband to live with another man, and her husband does not claim return of the bridewealth, any children she may bear are his. Divorce after the birth of a child is very unusual, and after the birth of a second child, almost unknown.

RITUAL AND OTHER CULTURAL FEATURES

TOTEMISM

776 The various Nuer lineages have specific ritual attitudes towards certain natural objects and living creatures. They respect the lion, reptiles, birds and plants; some lineages respect rivers and streams but, for all Nuer, rivers are specially associated with the mother spirit, Nyakang, who is held in reverence by all the people. Some lineages respect cattle with certain markings and therefore do not keep them. The largest clan in Nuerland - the Gaetgwhiir of the Jikany tribes - respect gourds, since, it is said, the ancestor of the clan was found in a gourd. In general, however, totems are associated with lineages rather than with clans.

[177] Nuer totems (*wuth*) are neither peculiar nor particularly important, and the Nuer themselves state that the majority of the totems come from the Dinka; they further maintain that the *buth* of Nuer lineages are sky spirits, or spirits of persons who have been killed by lightning and have become sky spirits. The totemic relationship is explained in the myths which tell how ancestors of the lineages and the members of the species related to the lineages, were born twins. A man respects his wife's totems and a woman her husband's, while children respect their mother's totems generally. A totemic relationship of the same type does not prevent marriage.

Respect for a totem consists in refraining from hurting it or eating it; in paying it some recognition and consideration, and in making an expression of regret should it be found dead. In turn the totemic species is expected not to cause any harm to those who respect it. Sacrifices and prayers are made to the totem and cattle are dedicated to it. The species itself is not worshipped although the representatives are

(1) Evans-Pritchard, Man, 1948, No.2, p.1.